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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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[REDACTED] ART UNIT [REDACTED] PAPER NUMBER

1652

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/950,071	Applicant(s) Farwick et al.	
	Examiner Christian L. Franda	Art Unit 1652	
<i>-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --</i>			
Period for Reply <p>A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely. - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). - Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b). 			
Status <p>1) <input type="checkbox"/> Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.</p> <p>2a) <input type="checkbox"/> This action is FINAL. 2b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This action is non-final.</p> <p>3) <input type="checkbox"/> Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under <i>Ex parte Quayle</i>, 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.</p>			
Disposition of Claims <p>4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>1-6, 10-22, 26, and 38-49</u> is/are pending in the application.</p> <p>4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.</p> <p>5) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.</p> <p>6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>1-6, 10-22, 26, and 38-49</u> is/are rejected.</p> <p>7) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.</p> <p>8) <input type="checkbox"/> Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.</p>			
Application Papers <p>9) <input type="checkbox"/> The specification is objected to by the Examiner.</p> <p>10) <input type="checkbox"/> The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) <input type="checkbox"/> accepted or b) <input type="checkbox"/> objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).</p> <p>11) <input type="checkbox"/> The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) <input type="checkbox"/> approved b) <input type="checkbox"/> disapproved by the Examiner. If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.</p> <p>12) <input type="checkbox"/> The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.</p>			
Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120 <p>13) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).</p> <p>a) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All b) <input type="checkbox"/> Some* c) <input type="checkbox"/> None of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____. 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)). <p>*See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.</p>			
<p>i4) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e).</p> <p>a) <input type="checkbox"/> The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.</p> <p>15) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.</p>			
Attachment(s) <p>1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)</p> <p>2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)</p> <p>3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____</p> <p>4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____</p> <p>5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)</p> <p>6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____</p>			

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DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-6, 10-22, 26, and 38-49 are under consideration in this Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph

2. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:
The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.
3. Claims 1-6, 10-22, 26, and 38-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention.

Applicant's arguments filed 6/27/2002 (Paper No. 12) have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicants' position is that no evidence is provided to support the rejection and that the claims are presumed to be enabled unless evidence is provided to the contrary.

The claims encompass any isolated polynucleotide which is at least 70%, 80%, or 90% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1. Factors to be considered in determining whether undue experimentation is required, are summarized In re Wands [858 F.2d 731, 8 USPQ 2nd 1400 (Fed. Cir. 1988)]. The Wands factors are: (a) the quantity of experimentation necessary, (b) the amount of direction or guidance presented, (c) the presence or absence of working example, (d) the nature of the invention, (e) the state of the prior art, (f) the relative skill of those in the art, (g) the predictability or unpredictability of the art, and (h) the breadth of the claim.

The state of the art as exemplified by Attwood et al. (Comput. Chem. 2001, Vol. 25(4), pp. 329-39) is such that "...we do not fully understand the rules of protein folding, so we cannot predict protein structure; and we cannot invariably diagnose protein function, given knowledge only of its sequence or structure in isolation" (see Abstract and entire publication). Furthermore, Ponting (Brief. Bioinform. March 2001, Vol. 2(1), pp. 19-29) states that "...predicting function by homology is a qualitative, rather than quantitative, process and requires particular care to be taken...due attention should be paid to all available clues to function, including orthologue identification, conservation of particular residue types, and the co-occurrence of domains in proteins" (See Abstract and entire publication).

The standard for meeting the enablement requirement is whether one of skill in the art can

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make the invention without undue experimentation. The amount of experimentation to determine the biological function, biological activity, or utility of said polynucleotides is enormous and entails screening for a vast number of organisms for an organism that contains said polynucleotides and determining the biological function, biological activity, or utility of the polynucleotides. Alternatively, such experimentation entails deleting, adding, substituting, or combinations thereof nucleotides in SEQ ID NO: 1 to make a polynucleotide that is at least 70%, 80%, or 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1 and determining the biological function, biological activity, or utility of the polynucleotide. The specification does not provide guidance with respect to the specific catalytic/structural amino acids and the structural motifs essential for protein structure and activity/function which must be preserved. Thus, searching for the specific nucleotides to substitute, delete, insert, or combinations thereof in SEQ ID NO: 1 and determining the biological function, biological activity, or utility of the polypeptide encoded by the polynucleotide is well outside the realm of routine experimentation and predictability in the art of success in determining whether the resulting polypeptide has activity of the RodA cell division protein is extremely low since no information is provided by the specification regarding the specific catalytic amino acids and the structural motifs essential for enzyme structure and activity/function which must be preserved.

The Examiner finds that one skilled in the art would require additional guidance, such as information regarding the specific catalytic/structural amino acids and the structural motifs essential for enzyme structure and activity/function which must be preserved. Without such a guidance, the experimentation left to those skilled in the art is undue.

4. Claims 1-6, 10-22, 26, and 38-49 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The claims are directed to all possible polynucleotides having at least 70%, 80%, 90% identity to SEQ ID NO: 1, all possible polynucleotides encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2, or all possible polynucleotides comprising SEQ ID NO: 1. The specification, however, only provides a single representative species encompassed by these claims: a polynucleotide consisting of the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1. There is no disclosure of any particular structure to function/activity relationship in the single disclosed species. The specification also fails to describe additional representative species of these polynucleotides by any identifying structural characteristics or properties for which no predictability of structure is apparent. The specification does not provide a written description of the amino acid sequence that is N-terminal or C-terminal to the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 2 or the nucleotide sequence that is 5' or 3' of SEQ ID NO: 1. Given this lack of additional representative species as encompassed by the claims, Applicants have failed to sufficiently describe the claimed invention,

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in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms that a skilled artisan would recognize Applicants were in possession of the claimed invention.

Conclusion

5. No claim is allowed.
6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christian L. Fronda whose telephone number is (703)305-1252. The Examiner can be contacted Monday-Friday from 8:30AM - 5:00PM. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Ponnathapura Achutamurthy, can be reached at (703)308-3804. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group 1600 receptionist whose telephone number is (703)308-0196.



Christian L. Fronda
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1600
Art Unit 1652